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ON SOME AUSTRALASIAN REPTILES.

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During the autumn of 1913 Dr. Hubert Lyman Clark accompanied the Carnegie Institution Expedition to Australia and to some of the islands in Torres Straits. The following list is based upon Clark's material. Most of the species are already recorded from the localities represented in this collection since the Rev. S. Maefarlane, long a missionary in the Torres Straits region, returned many collections to England which have frequently been mentioned by Guenther and Boulenger. The new python described in this paper is the more remarkable as coming from one of the Murray Islands, where collecting was extensively carried on by Maefarlane, and this find simply adds another instance to show how extremely fortuitous is all reptile collecting.

LIST OF SPECIES.

AMPHIBIA.

**Rana papua** Lesson.

Two young examples from Kuranda,\* Queensland, collected September 6, 1913. I have compared them with specimens of *Rana papua* of the same size from Manokwari and Sorong, New Guinea, and with larger specimens from Jobi (Jappen) Island. I can find no characters which separate them.

**Hyla coerulea** (White).

Three finely preserved examples from Mer Island, Murray Islands, Torres Straits, agree with Var. A. of Boulenger (Cat. Batr. Sal., 1882, p. 384) in having no lateral spots and the light line along the tarsus very inconspicuous. Since Boulenger's specimens from the Murray Islands

\* Kuranda, which will be mentioned several times, is a station twenty miles inland from Cairns, North Queensland, at an elevation of 2000 feet.

and Thursday Island also belong to this race, it may be that the form with lateral spots and a tarsal line occurs only on the Australian mainland and that only this unspotted form occurs on the islands, although it has been said to have been taken in Queensland as well. The limits—if limits there really be—of the ranges of these two color varieties are well worth the attention of Australian naturalists.

**Hyla krefftii** Guenther.

A single rather shrunken and hardened example also from Kuranda I have referred to this species. It seems to agree fairly well with the descriptions.

**Uperolia marmorata** Gray.

A young example from Kuranda may be referable to this species. However, it lacks the triangular dark spot between the eyes, the white spots on loin and back of thigh which Boulenger (Cat. Batr. Sal., 1882, p. 267) speaks of. Above it is olive, marbled or perhaps better vermiculated over all with darker.

OPHIDIA.

**Liasis clarki** sp. nov.

*Type*, an adult, No. 9600, Museum of Comparative Zoology, from Mer Island, Murray Islands, Torres Straits. Collected in October, 1913, by H. L. Clark.

This species may be distinguished at once from any of the described species of *Liasis* by its manner of combining the characters used by Boulenger (Cat. Snakes Brit. Mus., Vol. 1, 1893, p. 77) to separate groups I and II in his key to the species of this genus. Thus it has several small loreal shields and also a deeply and conspicuously pitted rostral. It also has two pairs of praefrontals.

Rostral broader than deep, slightly visible from above, deeply pitted; internasals a little longer than broad, about one-half the length of the major pair of praefrontals; the minor praefrontals are widely separated by the major praefrontals which also form a wide suture with the frontal; frontal about as broad as long, broader at its anterior than at its posterior end; much shorter than its distance from the end of the snout; two pairs of parietals, the anterior as wide as but much shorter than the posterior; five small loreal shields; two prae- and four postoculars; eleven upper labials, first, second and third deeply pitted, fourth and fifth pitted but less conspicuously so; sixth and seventh entering orbit; sixteen lower labials, seventh to ninth slightly and tenth to fifteenth very deeply pitted. Scales in 47 rows. Ventrals 317, anal single, subcaudals 116. More or less uniform brown above, yellowish below.

*Liasis childreni* Gray has been recorded by Boulenger from "Islands in Torres Straits," collected by Rev. S. Macfarlane, who as a matter of

fact collected extensively in the Murray group. *Liasis olivaceus* Gray has also been recorded from Cornwallis Island taken by the same collector. There are probably several species upon some of the islands and among these forms some may have extremely restricted distributions. This Museum also possesses two examples of *childreni* which were purchased from E. Gerrard in London by Mr. A. Agassiz in 1877. They are also labelled as from "Islands in Torres Straits" and undoubtedly represent part of Macfarlane's collection. They represent a form but distantly related to this one which I now describe.

**Dendrophis calligaster** Guenther.

A fine example of this characteristic Papuan species emphasizes the close relation which all of the Torres Straits Islands bear to New Guinea. The fauna is strongly Papuan with most of the prominent Australian types lacking. This species is recorded from both Cornwallis and the Murray Islands by Boulenger (Cat. Snakes Brit. Mus., Vol. 2, 1894, p. 81).

**Glyphodon tristis** Guenther.

Clark caught three beautiful specimens of this snake on Mer Island of the Murray group. He remarks that it seemed tame and inoffensive when alive and that the natives held it in no dread. He was surprised to learn of its affinities. It has long been known from this and nearby localities.

SAURIA.

**Gymnodactylus pelagicus** (Girard).

A single example of this wandering species was collected on Prince of Wales Island, Torres Straits, September 12, 1913.

**Hemidactylus frenatus** Duméril et Bibron.

Clark found this wide ranging species also at Mer Island, Murray Island, Torres Straits.

**Lialis burtonii** Gray.

A fine example similar to that described by Boulenger (Cat. Liz. Brit. Mus. Vol. 1, 1885, p. 248) as Var. D. This phase was represented in the British Museum by examples from Murray Islands and Cornwallis Island only. It is perhaps likely that it does not occur elsewhere.

**Diporophora bilineata** Gray.

Two from Prince of Wales Island, Torres Straits.

**Gonyocephalus spinipes** (A. Duméril).

An immature but beautifully preserved example from Kuranda, Queensland.

**Amphibolurus muricatus** (White).

One from Wentworth Falls, Blue Mts., New South Wales.

**Leiolepisma cyanogaster** (Lesson).

A beautiful example from Mer Island. It is apparently identical with specimens from New Guinea and New Britain.

**Leiolepisma fuscum** Duméril et Bibron.

This species is represented in the collection by specimens from Badu or Mulgrave Island, Mer Island and Darnley Island. I have also received it recently from Mossman in Queensland. These specimens differ constantly in coloration from the topotypes which I collected in Waigiu and from the many others from the Moluccas and Papua collected at the same time. Doubtless several distinct geographical races occur within this species, as in *Dasia smaragdina*.

**Leiolepisma peronii** (Duméril et Bibron).

A single example from Kuranda in Queensland.

**Leiolepisma albertisii** (Peters and Doria).

A beautifully preserved suite of twenty-seven specimens from Mer Island and one from Prince of Wales Island. The specimens from Mer Island are astonishingly unvarying in their color pattern. This stability of coloration in authentic specimens from the same locality has been impressed upon me more and more since my study of the living scines at various localities in the Moluccas and Papua.

**Homolepida crassicauda** (A. Duméril).

A fine specimen from Darnley Island, Torres Straits, whence the species does not seem to have been recorded before. It is known from Murray and Cornwallis Islands.

**Sphenomorphus quoyi** (Duméril et Bibron).

A well preserved adult from Kuranda, Queensland.

**Cryptoblepharus boutonii peronii** (Cocteau).

The specimens before me from Darnley Island, Prince of Wales Island, and Mer Island seem to agree with this race and can not be differentiated *inter se*. Their coloration is distinctive and remarkably uniform. The various races of *boutonii* have sometimes very restricted and usually well defined ranges and within this species coloration is an extremely valuable diagnostic feature. It must be noted, however, that these little creatures are easily carried from place to place especially by aboriginal commerce or migration and that much of the old material in Museums is probably incorrectly labelled as to locality. Thus it becomes increasingly difficult to limit the ranges of the forms as commerce and intercommunication increase. This race, *peronii*, apparently occurs in Waigiu, Papua and the Torres Straits Islands, but I have had no specimens from the Australian mainland to compare with them. Roux records it also from Aru Islands.

In the Ké group its place is taken by the distinct race *keiensis* Roux, while on Bali and Lombok are found confined the races *balinensis* Barbour and *cursor* Barbour. Further exploration will doubtless reveal many others.

## TESTUDINATA.

**Chelonia japonica** (Thunberg).

A young example from Mer Island but slightly larger than the one figured by Stejneger (Herp. Japan, 1907, p. 509) from the Bonin Islands, agrees well with his figure, as well as with those figured by Fry (Rec. Austr. Mus. 10, 1913, pl. 20) from Torres Straits. Fry uses the name *C. mydas* Linné and although unfortunately I have no young West Indian examples before me I feel that reason requires my using Thunberg's name. Young specimens from Penang and the coast of Bengal are very similar to the Mer specimen. I find that the young specimen from Penang (M. C. Z. 1413) captured by Captain W. H. A. Putnam of Salem is the one from which Garman took the description of the young of his *C. depressa*, thereby making it a cotype of that species. This was the basis of Garman's remark that *depressa* occurred in the "East Indies and Australia." While this is possibly true, this record can not stand, since comparison with Fry's excellent description and figures in his recent redescription of *depressa* (l. c. p. 159-185 pl. 19-22) shows that the Penang specimen is a *Chelonia* of the *mydas-japonica* and not of the *depressa* type. It may be added that the adult type was purchased from Professor H. A. Ward and came from northern Australia, a fact now made known for the first time. It was probably procured by him during one of his trips to the Torres Straits region.

